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JUL 18 2007

Ravalli County Commissioners

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July 16, 2007

Ravalli County Commissioners
215, South 4th Street, Suite A
Hamilton, Montana 59840

Attn: Greg Chilcott
Alan Thompson
Kathleen Driscoll
Carlotta Grandstaff
James Rokosch

Re: Proposed Lost Horse Quarry

Good Day;

I am sorry not to be able to attend your hearing regarding the Forest Service's desire to have the county open the Lost Horse quarry. There have been many concerns voiced throughout our neighborhood up Lost Horse Road. It is my hope that your meeting will endeavor to clarify facts in order to make informed decisions. Because this is a heavily used road throughout the year, I have grave safety concerns should this mining project go forward. The proposed time of actually mining gravel has been projected during fall fishing, hunting season and throughout the snowmobile season, which coincides with our neighborhood children's school bus passage. Within our neighborhood, the road is treacherous to walk along, bicycle on or ride a horse on, with the blind corners and narrow passages. I shudder to think what it will be like to have gravel trucks traversing Lost Horse with tons of weight. There is such a narrow margin for error from a complacent driver who has been driving the same path day upon day at the wheel of a multi-ton rig. What happened on Meridian road looms large in my memory.

If this were a subdivision, the developer (in this case the Forest Service and/or Ravalli County) would be forced to bring the road up to county standards. There are places on Lost Horse Road that these gravel trucks will travel that currently are only 16 feet wide! In order to bring the road up to standard, there are several homes that will loose their front yards. Whose homes and property are you going to "take"?

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DIVISION OF THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS
530 SOUTH EAST ASIAN AVENUE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60607-7080
TEL: 773/936-5000 FAX: 773/936-5001

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PHYSICS DEPARTMENT
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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60607-7080
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If the County Commissioners are not going to enforce the road improvement, why would home developers be held to a certain standard for road usage, yet this mining operation, which jeopardizes county residents and tourists alike, not be held to the same road standards when developing a project? What will the costs be to add insurance to cover this new project? Are you sure this project warrants your support?

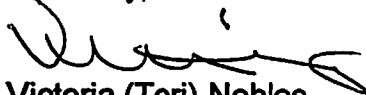
I urge your decisions to include attaining guaranteed prices on cost to start up this endeavor because the little I have researched the start-up costs of a mining operation are far beyond what has been voiced by the Road Department. What will the cost to acquire the equipment? Moving it into place is estimated to run in excess of \$50,000.00 according to an experienced neighbor. What about the cost of fuel to haul the gravel to another location (the fairgrounds?!?) for final washing and crushing? Where will the water come from to support the digging and washing of the gravel? Where does the runoff go? Doesn't it make sense to buy from a company that is already set up, such as Donaldson's?

What impact will all of the dust have on the Lost Horse Creek drainage? The currently healthy fish population? How will this impact the local Elk herd that uses this area for winter habitat? Can you predict the impact on Moose, Deer and other mammals that use the Creek area? Who is advocating for those without a voice? Who is considering the price to be paid by the residents of Lost Horse Road in noise, air pollution and driving peril?

Who is minding the taxpayers' pocketbook? Why has this issue materialized in the first place? I always say follow the money. Who is truly benefiting from this proposed project? With the principal safety issues to all who travel Lost Horse Road, tens of thousands of dollars in set-up costs not adequately addressed by the Road Department and the potential taking of land to widen an inadequate road, this project should be doomed from the start.

Please end this project before anymore time is wasted on it. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Victoria (Tori) Nobles
451 Lost Horse Road
Hamilton, MT 59840
406-363-0467

